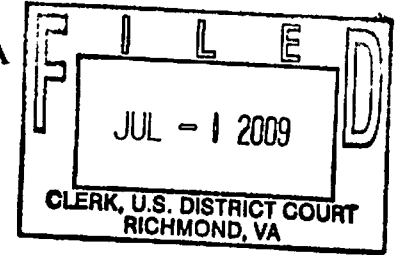


IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA  
Richmond Division



MAURICE SAMUEL WILSON,

Plaintiff,

v.

MR. BUTLER, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 3:08CV727-HEH

**MEMORANDUM OPINION**  
**(Dismissing Action Under 42 U.S.C. § 1983)**

Plaintiff, a Virginia prisoner proceeding *pro se*, brings this § 1983 civil rights action. The matter is before the Court for evaluation pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2) and 1915A. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b), the action was referred to the Magistrate Judge for initial review. Jurisdiction is appropriate pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1343(a)(3).

**I. PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

The Magistrate Judge made the following findings and recommendations:

The Court must dismiss any action filed by a prisoner if the Court determines the action (1) "is frivolous" or (2) "fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted." 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2); *see* 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. The first standard includes claims based upon "an indisputably meritless legal theory," or claims where the "factual contentions are clearly baseless." *Clay v. Yates*, 809 F. Supp. 417, 427 (E.D. Va. 1992) (*quoting Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 327 (1989)). The second standard is the familiar standard for a motion to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6).

"A motion to dismiss under Rule 12(b)(6) tests the sufficiency of a complaint; importantly, it does not resolve contests surrounding the facts, the merits of a claim, or the applicability of defenses." *Republican Party of N.C. v. Martin*, 980 F.2d 943, 952 (4th Cir. 1992) (*citing* 5A Charles A. Wright & Arthur R. Miller, *Federal Practice and Procedure* § 1356 (1990)). In considering a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim, a plaintiff's well-pleaded allegations are taken as true and the complaint is viewed in the light most favorable to the

plaintiff. *Mylan Labs., Inc. v. Matkari*, 7 F.3d 1130, 1134 (4th Cir. 1993); see also *Martin*, 980 F.2d at 952.

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure “require[] only ‘a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief,’ in order to ‘give the defendant fair notice of what the . . . claim is and the grounds upon which it rests.’” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007) (quoting *Conley v. Gibson*, 355 U.S. 41, 47 (1957)). Courts long have cited the “rule that a complaint should not be dismissed for failure to state a claim unless it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of [a] claim which would entitle him [or her] to relief.” *Conley*, 355 U.S. at 45-46. In *Bell Atlantic Corp.*, the Supreme Court noted that the complaint need not assert “detailed factual allegations,” but must contain “more than labels and conclusions” or a “formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action.” 550 U.S. at 555 (citations omitted). Thus, the “[f]actual allegations must be enough to raise a right to relief above the speculative level,” *id.* (citation omitted), to one that is “plausible on its face,” *id.* at 570, rather than “conceivable.” *Id.* Therefore, in order for a claim or complaint to survive dismissal for failure to state a claim, the plaintiff must “allege facts sufficient to state all the elements of [his or] her claim.” *Bass v. E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co.*, 324 F.3d 761, 765 (4th Cir. 2003) (citing *Dickson v. Microsoft Corp.*, 309 F.3d 193, 213 (4th Cir. 2002); *Iodice v. United States*, 289 F.3d 270, 281 (4th Cir. 2002)). Lastly, while the Court liberally construes *pro se* complaints, *Gordon v. Leake*, 574 F.2d 1147, 1151 (4th Cir. 1978), it does not act as the inmate’s advocate, *sua sponte* developing statutory and constitutional claims the inmate failed to clearly raise on the face of his complaint. See *Brock v. Carroll*, 107 F.3d 241, 243 (4th Cir. 1997) (Luttig, J., concurring); *Beaudett v. City of Hampton*, 775 F.2d 1274, 1278 (4th Cir. 1985).

### **Allegations and Analysis**

Plaintiff is an inmate at the Western Tidewater Regional Jail. Plaintiff alleges that he was denied adequate medical care. Plaintiff names Mr. Butler, Ms. Mattie, and Mr. Glenn as defendants. Plaintiff demands \$13,000.00 in damages.

In order to state a viable claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege that a person acting under color of state law deprived him or her of a constitutional right or of a right conferred by a law of the United States. See *Dowe v. Total Action Against Poverty in Roanoke Valley*, 145 F.3d 653, 658 (4th Cir. 1998) (citing 42 U.S.C. § 1983). Plaintiff fails to even mention Defendants Butler, Mattie, and Glenn in the body of the complaint, much less allege, as he must, how they personally participated in a violation of his rights. See *Vinnedge v. Gibbs*, 550 F.2d 926, 928 (4th Cir. 1977) (noting that the doctrine of *respondeat superior* is inapplicable to § 1983 actions). The indulgence shown to *pro se* litigants does not relieve them of the obligation to provide each defendant with fair notice of the facts upon which his or her liability rests. *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007) (quoting *Conley v. Gibson*, 355 U.S. 41, 47 (1957)). Thus, “[w]here a complaint alleges no specific act or conduct on the part of the defendant and the complaint is silent as to the defendant except for his

name appearing in the caption, the complaint is properly dismissed, even under the liberal construction to be given pro se complaints.” *Potter v. Clark*, 497 F.2d 1206, 1207 (7th Cir. 1974) (citing *Brzozowski v. Randall*, 281 F. Supp. 306, 312 (E.D. Pa. 1968)). Accordingly, it is RECOMMENDED that the action be DISMISSED.

(Report and Recommendation entered on May 29, 2009.) The Court advised Plaintiff that he could file objections or an amended complaint within ten (10) days of the date of entry thereof. Plaintiff has not responded.<sup>1</sup>

## II. STANDARD OF REVIEW

“The magistrate makes only a recommendation to this court. The recommendation has no presumptive weight, and the responsibility to make a final determination remains with this court.” *Estrada v. Witkowski*, 816 F. Supp. 408, 410 (D.S.C. 1993) (citing *Mathews v. Weber*, 423 U.S. 261, 270-71 (1976)). This Court “shall make a de novo determination of those portions of the report or specified proposed findings or recommendations to which objection is made.” 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1). “The filing of objections to a magistrate’s report enables the district judge to focus attention on those issues-factual and legal-that are at the heart of the parties’ dispute.” *Thomas v. Arn*, 474 U.S. 140, 147 (1985). In the absence of a specific written objection, this Court may adopt a magistrate judge’s recommendation without conducting a *de novo* review. *See Diamond v. Colonial Life & Accident Ins. Co.*, 416 F.3d 310, 316 (4th Cir. 2005).

## III. CONCLUSION

There being no objections and upon review of the record and the Report and Recommendation, the Report and Recommendation will be ACCEPTED AND ADOPTED, and


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<sup>1</sup> On June 9, 2009, the Report and Recommendation was returned to the Court by the United States Postal Service. Plaintiff apparently is no longer an inmate at the Western Tidewater Regional Jail and has failed to provide the Court with notice of his new address.

the action will be DISMISSED. The Clerk will be DIRECTED to note the disposition of the action for purposes of the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1995. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1915(g).

An appropriate Order shall issue.

Date: **July 1, 2009**  
Richmond, Virginia

 /s/  
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**Henry E. Hudson**  
**United States District Judge**